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Knowlton

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(54) **MECHANISM FOR THE CAPTURE OF GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATIONS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A visual link mechanism residing in a local system for identifying addresses of locations in the plurality of remote systems wherein the local system is connected through a network to the plurality of remote systems. The visual link mechanism includes a visual link library and a network access mechanism responsive to a visual link including a displayable graphic icon for accessing the location represented by a selected graphic icon. Various structures of visual links are described, each being an entity existing independently of the system environment in which it resides, and the network access mechanism includes a layout table for storing a plurality of plans for arranging and displaying a plurality of visual link graphic icons in a display, a visual links organizer, a visual link screen saver, and a hash protection mechanism for detecting the unauthorized construction or modification of visual links or other forms of files. Also described is a visual link capture engine for extracting graphics information from a data file and generating a corresponding graphic icon and a display layout generator for generating display layouts of sets of predetermined numbers of displayable visual objects.

15 Claims, 17 Drawing Sheets

